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# **Stellenbosch SRC 2015/16**

**Term report 1**

**September 2015 – November 2015**

**Portfolio: SRC Chairperson**

**Member: Axolile Qina**

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**Date: 2016-01-20**



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## General overview

### Personal reflection

The beginning of the SRC term began slowly with the Elsenburg issue following the Luister video. The Luister video paved the way to our baptism of fire for the SRC as then I was sent to speak on behalf of the SRC for our plans and way forward in response to this video at parliament. Coupled with this video we then attended proactively to the Elsenburg issue, where we called on the University for more information and went to investigate what the actual situation was there. During this time we had to assign portfolios to the SRC members and also a protest action of SASCO, who were advocating for a look into the outsourcing issue as well as the language of instruction to being parallel medium. In this time we also had SRC meetings that lasted over 5 hours, where robust discussions were made with regards to managerial positions namely: critical engagement to being divided into three portfolios of women empowerment, consciousness, and gender and sexual identities; and Post graduate and international students portfolio. During this time we also passed a motion of reviewing of Student structures student constitutions, initiated by Marc Rudolph (SRC Secretary General & Policy Officer) and Bradley Frolic (SRC of Transformation). In this time the Dean of student appointment of Pieter Kloppers was an issue and the SRC of Transformation, Bradley Frolic, read a statement at Student Parliament on behalf of the SRC, calling for a removal of the post and proper process of appointment of the Dean of Student appointment.

The SRC first quarter was one of continuing to be thrown into the fire, where we then had the budget issue, where fees were proposed increase of 11.5% for the year 2016. The SRC then strategically dealt with the issue by calling on Professor Stan, who is the Dean of Economics, who then gave us a presentation with regards to the proposed budget. I then further looked into loopholes where I believed that funds could be accounted for in other bodies of the University, such as Maties Sport and Alumni office. I further scheduled meeting with various stakeholders and communicated with the Rectors Management Team (RMT) to suspend the fees. Prior to this I along with Marc Rudolph went to Durban for the Transformation Summit of Higher Education, where the reality and complexities of the matter were relevant and a national issue. The biggest issue from management's side was that the institution would not be sustainable financially and from the students' side is that it would result in not having access of many students because of the hike in the price. Upon being in Durban Lwazi Phakade (SRC of Student Success) and Farai Mubaiwa (SRC of Woman empowerment) then had a meeting with students who shared their concerns with regards to the proposed fee increase.

The students then adamantly continued with this cause and then resulted in an occupation of Admin B, which was called the Winnie Mandela house. The building was occupied by students, where I then called for an executive committee where the executive failed to make a decision on what stance should be taken, after we looked

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and identified that in the student code of conduct, in the section of misconduct it clearly stipulates that any unauthorized occupation of a building of the university is illegal. We then proceeded to see what the students actually wanted. So the argument became law/rules verses morality and what is right for the students. There was a RMT meeting scheduled for Tuesday where I had hoped that with the presence of the whole SRC and voices from students from the previous meeting we would then ensure that the proposed fee increment be decreased, and begin to negotiate and work towards a reasonable percentage by finding means to get sponsors and financial aid of alumni and private sector. However when students occupied such plans went out the window and it became a difficult situation of what was best both legally and morally.

Mynhard Kruger (SRC of Security and Infrastructure) then informed me that he had been kicked out of meeting with the security management of Stellenbosch, where they would discuss the way forward. Mynhard then felt strongly that he write a letter as a form of a counter interdict and send to Pieter Kloppers, who would send it to an attorney. The SRC then wanted to see the letter and then we asked for it back, but it escalated and resulted in the assumption that we had called the police on the students. That was however not the case, as the very fact that the letter returned from Kloppers and not get to the attorney, no counter interdict was able to be established. The biggest argument in my mind was the fact that I did not want to see students get arrested for standing up for what they believe in. Sadly this caused division within the SRC, a friction that lasted until the end of the term. The language policy and outsourcing then became issues that followed after the feesmustfall movement. It took management four days to finally communicate with me in a room and discuss the way forward with students, with regards to the feesmustfall movement. The language policy however took place over exams, where the Rectors Management Team (RMT) surprisingly looked to implement English as the lingua franca of the University and parallel medium, but however this never passed at the council meeting of 30 November 2015, where council decided to stay true to the 2014 policy. The outsourcing issue however then resolved in terms of management proposing better conditions, no one to be fired, and paying an amount to works, The main issue with outsourcing is the fact that if insourced a large amount of workers would lose their jobs and further increase unemployment of the very workers who want to be employed by the university. This issue however occurred more in December then in the period time of this term report.

Overall the term of being Chairperson of the SRC was one of great discomfort and hard work, where one outside of these issues was still expected to attend to emails, meetings, and student concerns as well as thinking innovatively on how to ensure campus works towards the vision you aspire to achieve. I attended the Societies council, Prim Committee, and Academic council where I shared their practical responsibility in terms of the vision of the SRC for the year and their role in light of it. Also we had a strategic planning period, where I drafted the report and from that report drafted a document for the SRC to know the vision, what is expected of them

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as well as the goals that we set out as a team. Furthermore I visited Milak and Tygerberg to find out the issues on these campus and find out how we can assist in ensuring we are effective and meet the needs of the students there.

In closing the term in itself as you can see really tested one's boundaries and a trying time as an SRC where representation leaves one having to question their integrity and intent. Further being said that the above overview should lead you to communicate more effectively in terms of the team dynamic and ensure that when a decision is made is not made in isolation as that can really change the team dynamic and cause distrust. Not communicating at all doesn't help but it doesn't mean that you can't be bold and do what you believe is right for all students, however to get there will always be and mean a collective effort.

### **Portfolio overview**

The Chairperson role dynamic and are expected to learn how to get the team to work together and mediate between the team dynamic and voices that the council member actually represent. It's an uncomfortable seat where your personal values have to be put into practise and not bias to that members in the team feel that they don't have a voice or that you are against the needs of the students. It is also very administration orientation where everyone communicates to you first and you are expected to respond to them accordingly. Also many people want to set up meeting appointments with you, where some are very unnecessary as they don't seek to necessarily benefit the students but rather for their own research and input from you because you are the Chairperson. Furthermore the portfolio also expects you to lead the vision of the SRC and champion it by following up on it by checking up on the different portfolio's and giving them ideas to further better their portfolio's for the benefit of the students.

### **Portfolio responsibilities overview**

The chairperson of the SRC is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the SRC and is ultimately responsible of the finances of the SRC; this is stated in the Student Constitution. This means that the SRC budget is then finalised by you and the treasure at the end of the year so that it can be presented to the Student Parliament. Furthermore as Chairperson you are also expected in this term to facilitate and plan the strategic planning during the September break. The SRC camp in January is also your responsibility to plan out the time table, but work with your Vice and Treasurer to sort out the venue, food and other essentials. You are also the direct link between management and the Representative Council, the relations between the two are important for you to sustain the critical professional relationship, where we are bias towards the students always. You do this by setting meeting with the Rector or anyone on the Rectors Management Team (RMT) by weekly, which would assist in these relations and also clarity for them to understand the student context.

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### Committee overview (i/a)

There is no committee but rather a collective overview of the Representative Council, which all has its own portfolio's which you must appoint with your executive and Vice-Chairperson. It's very important you clarify the roles especially because the job of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson can result in a misunderstanding where the vice-chair, which is mainly because you have more management and media orientated administration, because you are the first line of communication and that whatever issue that arises it begin with the chairperson.

### Portfolio Priorities

As indicated above the Chairperson is the one responsible for the SRC and communicated to concerning things with management, SSG, and other stakeholders. Emails are a priority, chairing the SRC meeting, approval of the agenda, setting agenda of the executive meeting with the Secretary General. Also that you must approve the minutes of the meetings as they go on the website; and also leading the SRC towards the collective vision and mission; holding them accountable and giving direction to the issues that students face.

### How can the portfolio be improved?

The chairperson could be better if the outgoing SRC deal and finish issues that occurred during the year and not the new SRC, even though the baptism of fire assist and ensures that they step into the position. Also if the chairperson was given a personal assistant who is purely responsible for sorting of the emails of the chairperson so that they can attend to student needs and affectively lead the SRC. This assistant would assist to help the chairperson to organise the emails and even send some emails to the relevant portfolio involved. Lastly the relationship between the chairperson and vice-chairperson must be clearly established as these two jobs can overlap where you get the vice-chairperson playing chairperson and trying to fulfil the chairpersons role, which not only is it evident in the team but can be very frustrating and very difficult to resolve.



# Responsibility overview

## Responsibility 1: (Please state your responsibility here)

### Overview of responsibility

Vision and mission of the SRC  
Portfolio input  
Budget finalisation  
RMT relations  
SRC and SRC Executive meetings  
Emails

### Desired outcomes of responsibility

Draft a vision for each student community leaders to understand role in the larger student community as student leaders. Point here is to cultivate that student leaders to be more innovative and be clear in what they must work towards as leaders in the student community. Also for the SRC to be on board and have a way forward and ensure in the term that we then get to student leaders and explain our vision practically and for the leaders to ask questions and ensure that when we return in the new year we are ready for what we need to do. The budget finalisation was for the SRC so we can be transparent and be ready in the new term but the protest action delayed this and I went to a project in Europe which denied me the opportunity to meet with the treasurer (Lianda Du Plessis), it also didn't help that some SRC members handed their budgets in late.

### Outcomes achieved with responsibility

The meetings ensured that we passed a motion of student structures to send student constitutions to student court; Also a motion of communication in the University to be English; Also RMT relations through meeting and responsibilities.  
How can the execution of this responsibility be improved?

Ensure that SRC members meet the dead lines and that failure to do so then amounts from payments be deducted.

## Responsibility 2: (Please state your responsibility here)

### Overview of responsibility

### Desired outcomes of responsibility

### Outcomes achieved with responsibility



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How can the execution of this responsibility be improved?

### **Responsibility 3: (Please state your responsibility here)**

Overview of responsibility

Desired outcomes of responsibility

Outcomes achieved with responsibility

How can the execution of this responsibility be improved?

### **Supplementary Responsibilities**

Supplementary responsibilities are responsibilities that is day to day, but not major enough to be defined individually.

Overview of Supplementary Responsibilities

How can the execution of these responsibilities be improved?

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# Supportive Information

## Relevant contact information

James De Villiers	Vice Chairperson	082 766 0276	<a href="mailto:Pejames@sun.ac.za">Pejames@sun.ac.za</a>
Tulia George	Office	079 500 2768/021 808 3735	
<a href="mailto:tulia@sun.ac.za">tulia@sun.ac.za</a>			
Sharine Dowries	Office Secretary	079 087 6213/021 808 2491	

## Budgetary overview

Chairperson	
Travel Expenses	10000
Meeting Refreshments	1000

## Project overview (i/a)

### Project 1

A project I had in mind after seeing that students took transport from the neelsie to develop a more technological system where students can just swipe their student cards and then shows on the system that they need transport to their home.

### Project 2

### Project 3

## Overview of Term

The term was a very tiring and busy term. There were a lot of emotions and difficulty. I find it hard to connect with different members my council and how to navigate my very authoritative leadership in a very highly opinionated council that is not only passionate and progressive, but also understanding of the key issues on the campus. The generation gap was difficult but I however learned that team is more important than the old individual approach where everyone follows, something I had to unlearn. Nevertheless it is important for communication to be an effective and transparent with your council. Don't try doing things alone, always consult, always communicate and always open to learn. But also be disciplined and don't spend so much time with managerial meetings, pick and choose which ones are actually important and once decided stick to it. Also delegate and know the strength of your team so that you know how to use them so you are efficient. The portfolio should not be a barrier but a responsibility and be able to use your team to facilitate and attend to the responsibilities and tasks that come about. Trust is also important, sort

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out all political issues before starting and make sure that there is a loyalty within the SRC first for all members lest they run and stay loyal to their constituents which then causes a division and distrust within the team which is not conducive as a working environment. They can be much tension that then one regrets to even be part of the SRC, which is not healthy and neither psychologically helpful.

Generally your weeks are filled with meetings, emails, and listening to concerns of students. We had ridiculously long SRC meeting with the SRC where we ended at 3am, set limits and ensure that agenda points are explained prior to the meeting and not to first be presented at the meeting only.

#### Week 1 (14 – 20 September)

First SRC meeting and attended to the Elsenburg issue, further asking RMT questions regarding the relationship with them. A lot of meeting with various managerial departments and other initiatives being preposed by students and companies. Met with various members on the SRC to discuss their portfolio's.

#### Week 2 (21 – 27 September)

Attended Prim Committee, Societies Council, and ABR meetings where I shared the vision as well as their role on campus in light of the SRC vision.

#### Week 3 (28 – 3 October)

Managerial elections and interviews.

#### Week 4 (4 – 10 October)

Interviews with managerial to understand their plans and role of the SRC. Budget meeting with RMT revealed.

#### Week 5 (11 – 17 October)

Higher education summit in Durban

#### Week 6 (18 – 24 October)

Feesmustfall begins and week of protests and

#### Week 7 (25 – 31 October)

Debrief and exams extended by a week.

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# Addendums

**Addendum 1**

**Addendum 2**

**Addendum 3**